

children's work, chiefly old examination papers. It is an interesting fact that in most of the counties of England we have the means at hand for this sort of missionary organization, but I should like to urge on you the importance of working *through* H.M. Inspectors.

We women have a headlong way of rushing at things which does not always make for success, whereas the tact and even the very slowness to move of important officials tell in the long run, especially in dealing with teachers, who know that they are accomplishing a great work, and are themselves slow to move. I need not tell you to write to the Office or the College for any help, papers, etc., you may be in need of.

One more cautionary word. I should rather you did not take up this matter as a "cause" with any degree of violence or perturbation or any excitement which should lead to the neglect of those "few sheep in the wilderness"—the children in your own *Giocosa*. But I know that such words of caution are quite unnecessary, and commit to your wisdom and discretion a great cause with great confidence.
—Always affectionately yours, C. M. MASON.

N.B.—I believe that one of H.M. Inspectors is preparing a report on our work for the Board of Education. It might be as well to wait before you take any active steps until it is possible to make use of this report, which will be noticed in the *Parents' Review*.

LETTERS TO THE STUDENTS.

Government House,
Ootacamund,
March 25th, 1914.

MY DEAR AMBLESIDERS,

In case you have time to devote a few moments of valuable Conference time to those who are absent from you (in body only!), I write a few lines.

In Government House, as I am, one has practically no experience of India, but purely of the European in India. In the South, one does not need to acquire even the most superficial knowledge of the language, as all the natives speak English.

But apart from the work, the privilege of a post like this is, that one meets such a lot of people, and people who are doing great work, and have great responsibilities. It is true, too, that one meets numberless people once or twice, and then they pass on. Another thing, too, is, that one cannot select one's own circle of friends. It is a case of "everybody" or "nobody," because you always meet the same people on every occasion. But these are only a newcomer's first impressions. Gradually as you get accustomed to the life, you find that "society" who seemed at first so indifferent to anything but tennis and dancing, is full of longing and striving, interests and hobbies, and a very small proportion of the women spend all their afternoons playing bridge.

A great many of the people you meet out here are young parents, and love to discuss their children, whether at home or out here. I tell lots of them about the P.N.E.U., and some appreciate it, and some seem to think it is rather unpractical in spite of my persuasion, or else they say, "But my children are at home, so its no use for me." I always hope they will come across someone else, and then remember they were told of it before. I feel sure a branch here would help many, but have not yet seen a way to starting one.

This is nothing about my post, except that the attitude of people in general, and towards children in particular, makes me wish all Scale How were in posts here. So many people say, "We don't want to push on our children," and let them spend their first five, six, seven or

eight years laying no foundations at all, and leaving time and opportunity for all sorts of self-centred habits. I am sure not one child in a hundred knows anything at all of birds and flowers, and such delights. And yet this place is one great feast of nature.

This letter is not at all what I meant it to be, and altogether inadequate, but I fear going on without end if I don't bring myself to a sudden stop.—Yours ever,

JESSIE H. MELLIS SMITH.

Jobarpar,
E. Bengal.

DEAR EX-STUDENTS,

Here are my birthday greetings to you from the other end of nowhere. Jobarpar can only be reached in a small boat, there are no roads, nothing but rice fields, flooded most of the year, and clumps of palms and other tropical trees, amongst which the native huts are hidden away quite out of sight. We are only just opening out the work here. There is a fairly large Christian community scattered over Jobarpar, and six surrounding villages, and at present we spend most of our time visiting and teaching the women in their own homes. They are all quite poor people, very ignorant, and not able to read or write, and still full of heathen ideas and superstitions. Everyone, Christian as well as heathen, has a very strong consciousness of the presence of evil spirits. There is a superstition that if your name is called you must not go unless the call is repeated three times, for it might be a spirit. (I suppose a bad spirit's patience does not hold out very long!) This may sound funny in England, but there is a very real spirit of fear in this country.

We come into touch with the heathen chiefly through the Mission Dispensary, where hundreds of cases are treated

every week. I think many of the cures must be faith healing, the people have the utmost confidence in us, and believe we can cure anything if we will. They quite commonly think a sick person can be healed by touching us, or that if a nurse-sister goes to a baby case, the desired boy will arrive. Once a sister was asked for a bottle of "the foreign water with which you wash your babies to make them white." It seemed the idea was that English children are bathed in whisky as soon as they are born, and that accounts for their white skins!

Our idea in settling here is to try to raise the standard of the Christians, and to reach the Hindu population through them. Of course, the children are the real hope, so we mean to open a boarding school for girls as soon as we can, and I think I am to be in charge of it. The children are quite undisciplined when they come. They have no idea of self-control, and have never been accustomed to obey. They find it difficult to keep quite still or to grasp what is said to them at first hearing. But they respond quickly to kindness, and become quite different in looks and behaviour after even a few weeks at school.

I am afraid this gives little idea of the work. It would need a book and not just a short letter to tell you all.—
With love from

HELEN O.M.S.E. (Helen Dyke).

The Fort,
Gwalior.

MY DEAR FELLOW-STUDENTS,

... My work is, I am afraid, not directly P.N.E.U., though one does what one can by words here and there! I am at present keeping house for my brother, who is Principal of the school for the sons of nobles of the Gwalior State, and we live on the Fort, a great rock about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long,

with a good many carvings, old temples, and two palaces on the top. The boys are of all ages, between seven and twenty-two, and are very delightful people. Much of the work is military, so the whole school does infantry and cavalry drill, signalling, map-drawing, and so on. Most of the ordinary subjects are also taken, and at least one vernacular, either Urdu, Hindi, or Marathi. We are expecting the Viceroy next week for a two or three weeks' shooting tour in the State. The Maharajah has been getting everything ready for months, and I think he should have good sport. We see a great many interesting people up here, as the Fort is quite a show place. The last to come were an Egyptian prince, cousin of the Khedive, and Dr. Dunstan, head of the Imperial Institute. . . . Some of the boys here are going in for the matriculation examination, and are most amazingly hopeful. I never saw their equal that way. A boy will hardly ever admit that he did badly. Always "the stars were not propitious, or one of the examiners had a grudge against him." Another curious thing, in scoring at tennis, a boy will call out, not the score he has actually made, but what he hopes it will be next time. If the score is 30 all, the server will as often as not call 40—30! Good-bye, with best wishes to you all, yours sincerely,

ELSIE M. SAUNDERS.

Colombo,
Ceylon.

DEAR EX-STUDENTS,

This is just to wish the greatest success to the "Coming of Age" Conference. . . . I have been out in India over fifteen months now, six months of which I was in Peshawur, and six months in Kashmir. The latter was a delightful experience; we lived first in boats, stopping just

wherever we liked in the "Vale of Kashmir," and seeing most delightful scenery and people and customs. Then, as it got warmer, we rode up the valleys and camped at different spots, ending up by having a standing camp at nearly 9,000 feet high. We were just near the Zogi La Pass into Tibet, the great trading route into India, and we went over it, 17,000 feet, into Ladak. Unfortunately, while we were in camp I got ill, and as we were living in tents and miles away from any place where you could get a doctor or medicine, it was rather a serious business. By great good luck a lady missionary doctor appeared over another pass, and came and camped near us, and spent a fortnight of her well-earned holiday in pulling me through. After that I went to Jullunder for three months, and now have found my way down to Ceylon to my sister. I stopped at Agra on my way here to see the "Taj Mahal," the monument erected by the Moghul Emperor Shah Jehan to his wife. It is all white marble, with flowers worked in precious stones all round the tombs—perfectly wonderful. But I must not take up any more room.—With very best wishes from

JOSEPHINE WILKINSON.

Thornburn, Kalimpong,
Bengal.

DEAR AMBLESIDE STUDENTS,

. . . I am teaching in the school in connection with the St. Andrew's Colonial Homes for European and Eurasian Children, founded by the Rev. Dr. Graham in Kalimpong. We live right among the Himalayas, surrounded by peaks and peaks of snow. There are over 500 children in the school, and thirty live in each cottage, looked after by two ladies. In the centre of the settlement is the school. I

have a class of about forty infants, so there is plenty to do, but the children are very loveable, and not difficult to manage, and I love my work. Our letters must, I know, be short.—With all good wishes from

L. BEATTY.

Duars Manse,
Chalsa P.O., Jalpaiguri.

DEAR STUDENTS,

... I am living at the foot of the Himalayas, and in the centre of tea gardens. We have a most beautiful view from our bungalow; to the north are the Himalayas, the lower ranges covered with forest, and rising ridge upon ridge up to the snows of Bhutan. Then to the south, east, and west are the plains, on which we can see rivers and a huge forest. This forest is full of wild animals, elephants, tigers, leopards, buffalo, and rhinos. We often have leopards in our compound, and I am very much afraid one will run off with our two little dogs one day. A tiger was killed last Saturday on a tea garden just across the road from us, and in an adjoining district a tiger killed and ate a sleeping coolie not long ago. This sounds dreadful, but one might live all one's life here, and never see a wild beast.

... My husband goes away every week-end to different districts for services in the tea gardens. Sometimes I go with him. He has also a big mission among the aborigines of the Duars, who live a long way off on the borders of Assam. It takes about a fortnight to go round there. It is a very jungly place, and he has to walk or ride on an elephant, or in a bullock cart. He has not been able to take me yet, but I hope to go next cold weather. With many good wishes to you all, yours sincerely,

MARION MILNE (née Beatty).

c/o Mrs. Battye,
Udaipur, Rajputana.
March 18th, 1914.

DEAR STUDENTS,

My life is very quiet and uneventful. Our day is arranged very much as it would be in England; we do not have meals as is usual in India, but breakfast and lunch as in England. This allows time for a good morning's work at lessons from 10 to 1. In fact, the only thing in which our routine is out of the ordinary is that we have a daily drive from 9 to 10, and for the rest of the day the children and I usually stay in the house and garden. On half-holidays we often go out for picnics.

The morning drive is always an immense pleasure to me—the picturesque natives in their brilliantly coloured clothes; the women with their brass water pots; the brown naked babies; the flocks of goats, charming little creatures, far more pleasing than any European ones; ox-carts; a string of camels, absurd, supercilious-looking animals, tied undignifiedly by the nose to the tail of the one in front, all can be seen in the brilliant sunshine, and make fascinating pictures to watch.

Udaipur is one of the loveliest cities in India. The Maharana of Mewar, the State whose chief town it is, is one of the first of its rulers. He is descended from the Sun, he is chief of all the Rajputs, and by right of his office high priest to their tutelary deity. The present Maharana is an old man, and very adverse to things modern and European. His influence is strong, so Udaipur is far behind the rest of India in many ways.

The palace is a most beautiful building, situated on the side of the lake; fronting it are two islands, on which are smaller palaces, like it, of pure white and of lovely design. Into the city itself we rarely go; it is picturesque and

intensely interesting; but dirt and smells and disease-carrying flies don't make it a very desirable place for the children.

I was lucky enough this cold weather to enjoy a good spell of camp life. Major Battye went on tour to inspect various hospitals and dispensaries in the State. We travelled for five weeks from place to place, stopping usually two or three days in each. We journeyed in style, the tents and their furniture, our luggage, etc., being carried on camels. The washerman, two cows, and several hens also went with the camp. Mrs. Battye, the children, and I drove in the tonga, or, sometimes, to their delight, the children went on the riding camel. There certainly was not much roughing it to be done.

We usually travelled fairly early in the morning, and after a meal about 11.30 we had a rest, and then lessons, after tea, fishing, shooting, or sometimes a row on a lake. Twice we camped by very lovely lakes, on one occasion on the "bund"—a long terrace of white marble, built to prevent the water of the lake escaping through an opening in the hills. It was decorated with "kiosks" in finer marble, the roofs and pillars of which are magnificently carved.

With very best wishes for your enjoyment of the Conference.—Yours sincerely,

VERA GOOD.

Dow Hill School.

Kurseong, Bengal.

DEAR STUDENTS,

... Though I left England about eighteen months ago, I did not take up any work until the 3rd of this March, so have not been at my new post even a month. But it has been quite long enough to find out how much I like it, and how glad I am to be at work again. Just till the middle of

April I have been asked to teach in the training college of a big Government school, where I take all the nature work, brushwork, and singing, and criticize the students' lessons on those subjects, and history and literature. After the middle of April the former mistress returns, and I shall take work in the school itself, where I shall teach brushwork and drawing almost entirely. It is very interesting working in a training college, where the method of education is rather different from ours, but I am allowed an absolutely free hand, and may work on the lines of our own training, and have been told I may carry it out as far as possible in my work in the school itself. Heartiest good wishes to all from

RACHEL M. WEARING.

Muringato River, Nyeri,

British East Africa,

March 2nd, 1914.

DEAR STUDENTS,

... Our household here consists of "mummy, daddy, nanny," my two children, myself, and our various black house-boys. We live in a big cedar-wood bungalow, and there is also quite a little colony of papyrus grass huts near the house. These are used as spare rooms, and one is our schoolroom. Budgie is $6\frac{3}{4}$, and, of course, is Class I (a); Toddy is 5. He does a good deal of work for his age, but, as yet, gets very funny muddled ideas of the different lessons. I let him narrate as much as he likes, and he "must do all that Budgie does," but if the results are a little weird and strange I don't worry. He loves the work, so all is well. We do all the I (a) programmes, except music, because we have no piano, and, of course, we can't keep tadpoles, and describe the boundaries of three fields, because there are no fields and tadpoles in these

promiscuous parts! But we can bring other things into the lessons instead. It is, for instance, so easy to make them understand about the different tribes in the Old Testament, or how the Britons were all divided up into tribes often at war with each other. We live among the native tribes here, and they are nearly always antagonistic. Both Budgie and Toddy are the best of pupils! They love N.N.B., geography, history, and Scripture best. "The World at Home" they would have all day long were it possible!

We have very few flowers round us, so we can do but little "botanizing." Fierce animals are more or less common. Rhino have been seen on the farm, and lions!!! are to be found within a radius of ten miles. Needless to say I have not met either of these friends yet. Hyænas are to be heard every night. I have not seen one alive, but our manager set a gun-trap the other day, and next morning, behold! two dead hyænas, shot in the act of stealing. These little episodes lend interest to life in B.E.A.

I feel my time is up, and the chairman is tinkling the little bell, so farewell.—Yours affectionately,

ROSA HART.

U.M.C.A., Msalabani,
Muhesa, Tanga,
E. Africa.

DEAR STUDENTS,

How I wish I could be with you at the Conference, but I can only send my best wishes and my heartiest greetings to all. I have lately been moved to another "station" and different work, so I am only just beginning to get into the way of it. My chief work now is the care of several girls' village schools, taught chiefly by native teachers.

The teacher also preaches, visits and gives private instruction in Christianity to the grown-ups, and takes services. Often he and his family are the only Christians in the district, and it is a very responsible and lonely post, and everything he does is the standard by which the people round judge Christianity. If his wife is a good Christian, and has had a little education, she can be of the greatest help with the girls and women. Some of these women teachers are splendid, others well-meaning, but can barely read or write, and others are inclined to be slack. About three days a week I start forth at about 6.30 a.m. with a native basket full of books and papers and toys for the children, and food for myself, and I tramp several miles to one of these schools. The country round is beautiful, very hilly, with narrow paths wandering up and down in the most bewildering way, over bare rocks, through palm groves or grass growing above one's head, and out on the open hillside all green and luxuriant with tropical growth; cocoanuts, bananas, mangoes, orange trees, etc., etc., abound, and many beautiful flowering shrubs. There are also many streams to cross, sometimes by balancing oneself precariously on a tree-trunk, sometimes by wading boldly through, sometimes by stepping-stones or a plank bridge, which swings giddily to and fro, and I have been carried across by native men in great style! As soon as I get near the village, the children come out and dance round me with long-drawn cries of "Bi-i—bi-i" (i.e., lady), and they rush to carry my things. All the boys come out later and stand still and say, "Salaam." Then the grown-up people, if not at work in the fields, come and say in their courteous way: "All is well with us now that you have come. What is the news where you come from?" The teacher, or teachers, come out all smiles and greetings and polite inquiries after everyone in the mission. After this we go

to the school, and sometimes a huge drum of hippopotamus hide is beaten to call the children, and sometimes we only blow a whistle. The school is only a native hut of mud and sticks, and has no window, but if it is not very new, some mud fallen from the walls will leave holes for light and air to enter. The roof is thatch and so low that I have to creep in at the door practically on hands and knees—not a very dignified entrance for a school inspector! The only furniture in the school is a wooden board with grooves in which separate cards with the letters of the alphabet are placed, and a box of slates and pencils and a very few books, and sometimes a blackboard is resting against the roof tree. Religion is the chief subject, but the teaching of a woman native is very elementary, often merely repetition of a very simple catechism. My chief business is to inspect everything, but I always give a religious lesson too. Very few of the children can read, and sometimes the lessons are very quaint, as when the teacher asks, "What is 'h' like?" and is told, "'h' is like the teacher's chair," while the teacher happens to be pointing to G all the time! However, a combination of the syllabic and "look and say" method, which with this phonetically-spelt language is very easy, is now beginning to be used. The older children write on slates, the little ones on sand in boxes, or if the floor has not been well swept, they write on that! They also do a little singing and drill to make things more amusing. They love singing, and do so very heartily; and drill is a great joy, only it is very funny as there is so little space, and I sing the tune all the time I am doing the exercises myself and teaching and superintending everyone! When school is over I teach the Catechumens a New Testament lesson, and if there are any Christian children they have a lesson to themselves. If it is late, I stay at the school or at the teacher's house, where they regale me with very hot, sweet, weak,

milkless tea and bananas. Then I return, while the sun is still very hot. I really feel I never knew what heat was in England, or thirst either! And one does get so dirty; but one appreciates getting back all the more. It is extremely interesting work. I enjoy it very much, and one always gets such a hearty welcome. I also teach English to a young man who is preparing to be a teacher, and I have lessons from a native in Bondei—the tribal language of the people near here. We have to speak and teach in two languages at least—Swahili and Bondei—and I am learning Bondei through Swahili, and trying not to get muddled with the two! Then I do the German correspondence and talk to any German who visits us, and then I feel all my German leaving me and nothing but Swahili words will come into my mind.

Well, I must stop. If any of you can spare a thought for these people, living in unspeakable evil and ignorance, and so ready to respond to teaching, and some who are doing splendid mission work among their countrymen under very hard conditions, it would be such a help.

With best wishes to you all.—Yours very sincerely,

CLARA C. MONRO.

Rosegarth,

The Bourne,

Farnham.

April 13th, 1914.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have been asked to write to you a letter telling you something of my work among the girls of Uganda, and I think I cannot do better than give you some account of the two schools in which I have been working, for they are types of all other girls' schools in Uganda: there are only

two kinds—the boarding school for chiefs' daughters, where fees are paid, and the day school, in which the education is free.

The boarding school for girls at Gayaza, in which I have been working for four years, was started nine years ago for the daughters of chiefs and native clergy. It was difficult then, and, indeed, still is, to get many fathers to pay fees for the education of their daughters, as for generations past the work of women has been to cultivate the soil, and education was not thought necessary for them. But yet to-day we have ninety girls in this school. Many of them, it is true, are not paid for by their parents, but by subscriptions from friends at home in England, yet there are a good many whose parents pay regularly the £2 a year, which is all the fee we ask for their board and education.

There is practically nothing of what we call family life in Uganda, and no training of the children in the home; the consequence is that these girls come to us with no idea of obedience or truthfulness, no thoughtfulness for others, and no habit of industry.

Most of the girls who come to us have already been baptised in infancy, they are children of Christian parents, yet many of them know almost nothing of Christianity. Some of them, indeed, have been brought up in heathen homes, according to an old custom of sending children to be brought up by the grand-parents.

The school was first started with the object of helping the girls to grow up pure. Many of the homes from which these girls come are very bad immoral places, where there is absolutely no chance for a child to grow up innocent; then the very fact of a girl going by herself every day to a day school puts her into a position of great temptation which very few can stand. The girls have all to be very strictly kept in the school, no girl is allowed to go outside

the compound by herself for any purpose whatever. At first this restriction of their liberties was not at all appreciated, and several of the girls ran away, but they were always brought back by their parents, and gradually they settled down, and got used to the new state of things.

We have three houses, where the girls live with their matrons, and a large schoolroom, which is a separate building. The whole compound is entirely surrounded by plantations of bananas, in which the girls work every morning from 6 to 7.30; thus they are able to grow a considerable part of their food, and help to make the school self-supporting. The school hours are from 8.30 to 11.30 a.m., and from 1.30 to 4 p.m. Our great difficulty in teaching is the lack of books; there are hardly any school books at all in Uganda, and what there are are very inadequate. Of course the one book which we have is the Bible, and this is the centre of our teaching. We begin every morning with prayers and a Bible address, and then the school divides into the different Bible classes. You may wonder how two Europeans can teach a school of ninety girls. We have six native matrons, who take charge of the different houses, and each of them has a Bible class to teach, but as for anything else, they don't even know how to write, and one sees them in the lowest writing class sitting by the babies learning to write their letters! We have to train the most advanced pupils to teach the younger ones, and in this way we get very good teachers. All the arithmetic and writing classes are taken by the girls, and then they have their own classes afterwards; they make quite good teachers, and are strict disciplinarians.

It used to be thought that the girls were far behind the boys in intellect, but I do not think this is the case.

Handicrafts form a large part of our curriculum. The girls are very skilful with their fingers, and some learn to make

strong native baskets and to plait the native palm-frond mats. They also learn to sew beautifully; we find sewing a great help in their training. Drawn-thread work teaches them to be careful and accurate; they see so plainly the need for exactness in measuring the threads, and how completely their work is spoilt for the lack of correct measurement. They also learn to weave narrow coloured borders on lengths of cloth for the garment which is worn by women and girls throughout the country.

The great object of our school is, of course, to develop Christian character in every girl, and though we do have many disappointments, we have also much encouragement. It is necessarily slow work, and only perhaps by looking back can one see what progress has been made. These girls are to be the mothers of the future leaders of the country, for they are the daughters of the leading chiefs, and will be the wives of important men. The king will choose his wife from among them; the king's sister is also in the school, and the twin daughters of the prime minister.

We have also at Gayaza a day school with 160 names on the books, and there is often an attendance of over 100. The great difficulties in running the day schools are, firstly, the lack of teachers; and secondly, the irregularity with which the children attend. Many never come in the morning; they are kept by their mothers in the plantations to help with the cultivation and cooking of the food.

Then children are often kept from school in order to go and visit sick relations, or to attend funeral rites, which sometimes means an absence of two or three months! You may judge how difficult it is to keep a school under such circumstances.

There are in our district, which extends about ten miles in each direction round Gayaza, about forty village schools, in which boys and girls are taught together by a native boy

schoolmaster. I have visited most of these schools, and find that the teaching is very poor, and girls in every case are fewer than the boys, and behind them. This is owing to the fact that the schools are mixed, and the teacher is always a man or boy. This is quite contrary to native custom, and is a very bad plan. Directly girls are taught by themselves and by a woman or girl they go forward. What we want to do is to train a number of girl pupil teachers to go and take charge of the girls' work in these village schools. Three of our pupil teachers at Gayaza were sent out last January to three village schools. I heard from one of them a short time ago, and she told me that the first morning she had four girls, but that after a month or so the number had risen to sixty.

When these pupil teachers have had a year's practical experience in these village schools we want to have them back again at Gayaza for a further year's training in a normal school, after which they will be examined for a teacher's certificate, and be sent out again to larger schools.

When I go back in the autumn I hope to be able to start this normal school not for Gayaza district only, but for girls from all over the country of Uganda. By this means we hope that the girls' work will advance.

I think you will understand that a boarding school of 90 girls, a day school of over 100, a pupil teacher's class, and a normal school, besides such trifles as a dispensary, women's classes, and the supervision of women's and girls' work in the district, is rather much for two European women to manage adequately, and I must confess that in very many things we absolutely fail, owing to lack of time. We badly want more workers. The work is so interesting, and there is such tremendous need for more workers not only in Uganda, but in every mission field throughout the world, that I cannot imagine why teachers who are

Christians do not offer in greater numbers for this work. Are there none among the members of this Conference who are willing to obey the call which sounded so long ago, "Go ye and teach all nations"? There is no doubt that that call was for every Christian, and then also to know the need is a very clear call.

What I would ask you to do is to ask yourselves, "What prevents me from obeying that call?" I think there must be some who, if they answer honestly, will be unable to find adequate reasons for disobeying it any longer. I can assure you from my own experience that no life can be fuller, happier, or more satisfying than that of the teacher who goes out to those lands where so many are waiting in darkness for the light of the true knowledge.—I am, yours sincerely,

C. JANET SMYTH.

Shulus, Coutlee,
B. Columbia.

DEAR STUDENTS,

... It is just a year ago since I came here; little did I think when I came out to British Columbia it would be to teach the young Indians of the Far West. The school in form and size is just similar to the old practising school, except that its floor is raised. It is just at the end of the Indian village close to the Mission House and hospital, with the C.P. Railway branch line passing on one side. The school is maintained by the Indian Government, but is under the guidance of the Church of England, so the clergyman, when not itinerating, comes in every morning for half an hour, otherwise, of course, I take them for their Bible teaching. There are about twenty children on the

list from 6 to 15 years, mostly boys. During the past months the children have been coming to school very steadily, about sixteen daily, but regular attendance is as yet a great problem. When spring comes, the mothers are busy cultivating their land, and take the smaller children with them, or they may go off for some weeks fishing; and the bigger boys are often away taking their horses up on to the ranges, or hunting lost ones, or breaking-in wild horses. Then just at the end of the summer holidays the Indian village is as plague stricken, for almost everyone has migrated either to the salmon canneries at the coast, or to the hop fields in the Frazer Valley; and at that time there were not more than three or four children in school. Later on in the fall comes the potato harvest, when the younger ones help the parents, and the big boys are busy rounding up the cattle. These interruptions are a great drawback to any steady work. The children, of course, are very handicapped by their little knowledge of English and my ignorance of Indian, but show quite a fair amount of ability and keenness. I divide the school roughly into two classes—the little ones and the bigger children—the latter I take together, as far as possible. Dictation I rarely manage successfully with the latter, as they are in such different stages. I have some excellent little primers, published by the R.T.S., which I sent for, with the parts of the words which are similar printed in one colour, and the parts which vary in another colour, and splendid illustrations. The blackboard, of course, is a great feature. When I came we had such a miniature blackboard that it was of little use, but have now got out of the Government three large hyloplate boards, which are a great boon, and help largely, especially with the little ones; and I get them then to give me the Indian word for anything they get acquainted with, and so we all learn together. The small

children delight in learning nursery rhymes and songs, especially when allowed to act them.

During the winter months the children all bring their toboggans to school, and while away much time when lessons are done on the little slope near by. Since the snow has gone not a boy is to be seen without his bow and arrows, which he makes himself, and the boys outshoot each other as they come and go from school. They also, I am sorry to say, with their true Indian instinct, shoot the birds, squirrels, chipmunks, etc. Of course I try and influence them indirectly—so I shall be greatly interested in the Conference discussion on sport.

During the winter months the clergyman and his wife have held night schools twice a week for the Indian men and women and older children, where they learn to sew, read, write, etc., and they turn up in great force.

Now I must not prolong this letter, but again renew my best wishes to you all.—With love from

RUBY M. WILLIAMS.

Sydcourt, Halfway Tree,
Kingston, Jamaica.
February 16th, 1914.

DEAR FELLOW-STUDENTS,

What an excellent and beneficent scheme to draw the poor overseas exiles into your proceedings. If I could only eat my cake and have it too, how gladly I would be at the Conference with you.

Jamaica is all I hoped it would be, and I seem to have dropped in here more as a visiting aunt than resident governess. I like it all very much, and do not find the heat

overwhelming as yet, though I am sorry to say we are being cheated of our "cold" weather, which should register 70-75° (a well conducted English summer temperature), and are having very often 82° and more at 5.30 p.m. The mornings from 6 to 8 are very pleasant, fresh, and not too bright, and we go out for more than an hour. The evenings, too, from 5.30 onward are most grateful and comforting. In between we have to be content to exist, and busy ourselves indoors. The heat is relieved by a strong sea breeze that arrives and departs most punctually; when it fails us we are indeed lost. Everyone here tells me fearful stories of how my English energy and interest will wear off in time. When I feel it oozing away I shall run down to the harbour and stow myself away on a home-going steamer.

I was greatly jeered at for bringing my bicycle, but I am thankful I did, for I am able to explore the neighbourhood, and to get exercise, and to be alone (last, but not least!). My walks with the children are necessarily circumscribed, but we are most lucky in having discovered a lane leading to a dry water course, called Sandy Gully, running through a vast scrubby plain at the foot of the hills, of which, by the way, we have a splendid view. This part is ideal for scouting. The children have khaki clothes; Dickie, aged 6, knickers and a shirt (his first shirt!), and Betty, 8½, a romping suit like French children often wear. They have khaki scout hats, too, and really are beginning to attain a great proficiency in simulating tree trunks or withered grass! We have done great work with a compass, too, going straight across the bush and scrub, and Betty ought to be able to give a most lively description of a compass and its uses, if asked in her examination. Except for their great powers of imagination, these children have few real scout qualities, but perhaps those will come. Poor Betty is

getting much harder about the burrs and numerous bushes armed with very fierce thorns that abound here!

In the evening we garden, play games, and read, or the children *act*, of which they never tire. This is a very pleasant, healthy life for children, and though they are in the house a good deal, the windows and doors are never shut, and there are spacious verandahs. We have lessons from 9 to 11.30 at present. In the summer our day starts earlier I believe, and, alas! we have no cool nights. Lunch is at 12.30, and after that we all retire to rest till nearly 4, tea-time. This is an excellent scheme, and on that account I heartily commend tropical posts. It is so hot, and the labour of coping with the young idea so strenuous that often I am glad to sleep, but if not, the spare time is most acceptable. I have seen something of the island, which is *very* beautiful, for Mr. Horne has an official car, in which he goes to inspect works, of which he has command; and sometimes we can go, too. He is hydraulic engineer for the Government. In that way we are in touch with the Government House functions, which is amusing.

All the vegetation is very striking, but coarse, and I must say I will appreciate English scenery more than ever, and the flowers and birds. Here, things are large and gaudy, and the birds have raucous voices, and there is nothing tender and intimate about nature. But all the same, it is lovely, and I am glad indeed that I came. I am keeping my nature note-book with much zeal; and the more because I look upon it as a record of what I see, for future identification, for it is *most* difficult to find out names here. I was asked to write of my "work and the conditions under which it is done, *and so on*." I fear I have paid more attention to the last clause, but after all, that is the chief part of one's work, in a residential post, it seems to me. There is no doubt that it is a promising field for P.N.E.U.

labours. We have our lessons in a 10 feet wide verandah, looking north, to the Blue Hills, and it is fairly cool. The children are very proud of their school table, especially made, long and low, such as we laboured at in the good old days. I must stop now, for even if this is what you want to hear, it is more than enough, I am sure. With all good wishes, yours sincerely,

D. CHAPLIN.

3, Edmunds Place,
Shepherdess Walk, N.

April 19th.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I must begin by apologizing for not writing to you earlier. Now I must thank you all very much for sending me such substantial help for the children's parties at Christmas. This year we used your money for a Sunday School party for the children ranging from 10 to 15 years of age. They always have a party, and, as a rule, a few prizes are given to the children who have attended most regularly during the year, and the others get nothing. I am sure you will be pleased to hear that my vicar hates Sunday School prizes, and would like to have them abolished entirely, but you will agree that the plan of "no prizes" would not be very easy to carry out. So this year, after the prize-giving, the children were amazed and delighted by this startling announcement, "There is a present for everyone in the room." I wish you could have heard the gasp of delighted astonishment! The children were on the point of mobbing the helpers who came forward with baskets full of toys. However, they managed to sit still, and soon all were satisfied, even for once those stray, embarrassing little people in Hoxton—I haven't met them anywhere else—who come forward and

say, "Miss, I don't like this," returning a toy which is apparently charming.

We had some dolls from the *Evening News* and some other toys—not new, but very nice—sent by children; but your money went to provide for those very difficult people, the big boys, and also for the girls, who were too grown-up for dolls. Now I really should like to know whether students approve of my using their money for this sort of thing, or whether they would rather it was put to a more serious use. If they preferred, I could use it to provide Christmas dinners, or keep it to convalesce a sick child, or give it to a day school boot club, or various other things. I wish I could have been at the Conference to answer any questions put to me, but I do hope that you will let me know if you think my use of the money is not a good one. For myself, I know that you cannot do anything which will give more joy to the little Hoxton children. With love to all, yours very sincerely,

MABEL CONDER.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

It has been suggested that English grammar should be removed from our programmes, or given as an alternative subject to Latin, and I was asked to read a paper in favour of its retention on the programme. There seem to be two important points for consideration: (1) Why we should keep English grammar on the programme. (2) How we may overcome some of the difficulties in teaching it.

Firstly, it is important that children should have a knowledge of the history of their own language and its origin. At present, as far as I know, this most interesting part of grammar is too often taught only to pupils well advanced in the subject, those who have ploughed their way through the early stages of nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. Would it

not be possible to combine the "history part" of grammar with the technical part? It would, I feel sure, appeal to children, and help to do away with the antipathy which so many seem to feel towards grammar. At present there are two or three half-hours a week set down for English grammar in the time-table for Class III. If parsing and analysis were taken once a week, Arnold's language lessons or Gow's *Method of English* another time, then the third set time might be given to studying the *history* of our language. How the children would love to hear about the life of the early Britons, the instruments and utensils they used for cooking, etc., and then they will see that many of the words in use to-day, words relating to the house, the kitchen, and the farm, are the same as those used by those old Celts. Then the coming of the Romans, and consequently the introduction of words relating to war and conquest. Then the invasions and victories of Angles, Saxons, and Danes, and the beginning of the *English* language, followed later by the Norman Conquest bringing in French words, and so on.

Then, secondly, grammar gives children a knowledge of construction, which is a great help in composition. Analysis helps them to express themselves shortly and concisely, instead of in the rambling style natural to so many children. Of course, there is always the old argument brought forward that the children of educated parents speak and write correctly without learning English grammar. That is perfectly true in a great many cases, but not always. Only the other day I heard of a well educated man, who confessed that he did not know when to use "shall" and when "will" in conversation.

Some people, of course, say that little things like this do not matter. But if a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well, and there is no doubt that it is far preferable